

which were alarming even to me. I have been studying this and writing legislation on it. It has to do with a type of diabetes called type 2, adult onset diabetes. What this new research showed is that one in three Americans born right now—the date was from the year 2000, but one in three Americans who are born in the year 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime. That is higher than any estimate we have known to date in medical literature. In fact, the American Diabetes Association had an estimate which was generally accepted broadly, based on good data. This is three times that. One in three Americans born right now will develop diabetes.

The good news is that doesn't have to be the case. Things can be done that can reverse that. I am very interested and will continue to focus on health disparities between gender, men, women, between ethnicity, between race. And if you look at this data in terms of African Americans and Hispanic children, nearly half will develop diabetes. Women are at higher risk than men, and the disease is striking at younger ages. It used to be a little bit older. Now it is younger and younger that this type of type 2 diabetes strikes.

The number of diagnosed cases among the population as a whole has jumped 50 percent in the last 10 years hitting over 11 million in the year 2000. That figure will skyrocket to 165 percent by 2050, putting the number of Americans with type 2 diabetes at 29 million. The implications of this are severe. Diabetes leads to a whole host of chronic illnesses. It is the leading cause of kidney disease, heart disease, amputations, and blindness.

The good news is these high rates of diabetes are not inevitable. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented. That is because the leading cause of type 2 diabetes is obesity and lack of exercise.

Walking for 30 minutes a day, losing a few pounds can literally cut a person's risk by more than half.

You don't have to be a marathon runner, an iron man participant, but following that mantra of moderate exercise and moderate, even minimal weight loss can make a huge difference. You can reap huge health rewards.

That is why Senator BINGAMAN, Senator DODD, and I and many others on both sides of the aisle introduced a piece of legislation called the INPACT Act, the Improved Nutrition and Physical Activity Act, with obesity rates double what they were 30 years ago. And we are learning a lot about obesity disease scientifically almost every day. Americans need, more than ever, to be able to make and be encouraged to make healthy decisions about nutrition and physical activity. On the House side, I am pleased that Representatives MARY BONO and KAY GRANGER, along with other cosponsors, introduced companion legislation earlier this year. I will not go into the legislation now.

I encourage my colleagues who are not cosponsors to look at it so we can pass that in the future. It is a multifaceted approach. It emphasizes youth education to jump-start healthy habits early on, to prevent a future struggle with weight. It funds demonstration projects to find innovative, creative ways of improving eating and developing good exercise habits. It includes rigorous evaluations so we can learn what works best. What it does not do is outlaw certain "bad" foods in any way.

It doesn't attempt to micromanage or regulate what Americans eat or drink. It does have a modest price tag, consistent with what the appropriate role of the Federal Government should be. It doesn't attempt to replicate a billion dollar diet industry or the fitness industry that is out there. I know—we all know—there is no single solution to this growing epidemic of obesity. We know it is an epidemic. We know it is getting worse. We do know that leadership on our part can make a difference, can increase awareness of the serious medical consequences, in particular for children.

As the adults in this situation, we can and indeed we must show our determination to keep them safe by keeping them fit.

NOMINATION OF C. STEWART VERDERY, JR.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Senate's confirmation of the nomination of C. Stewart Verdery, Jr. to be Assistant Secretary for Border and Transportation Security Policy at the Department of Homeland Security. At a time when the new Department of Homeland Security needs to have all vacancies filled, having Mr. Verdery confirmed will fill a vital position from which he will develop policy related to immigration, customs and trade, transportation security and international security issues.

As a counsel working for me on the Senate Judiciary Committee and working with me and my staff when he served for the Senate leadership, Mr. Verdery demonstrated superior political and legal skills which will serve the Department of Homeland Security and the country well.

After working for me as unit head of the Crime and Drug Policy Unit, which handles all matters related to law enforcement, including Federal crime and drug legislation and terrorism, Stewart has an invaluable knowledge of the issues which may confront him in the Border and Transportation Security Directorate. Mr. Verdery served with distinction for me and the committee at large and I know he will take his talents to the Department.

In sum, I believe that Mr. Verdery will be a valuable assistant to the President and to the Secretary for Homeland Security, and the administration will be well served by his confirmation. I thank my colleagues for their support of this nomination.

BUYING A HANDGUN FOR SOMEONE ELSE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles published a study in the June issue of *Injury Prevention* entitled "Buying a Handgun for Someone Else: Firearm Dealer Willingness to Sell." The study found that more than half of gun dealers are willing to ignore or sidestep the law to sell a firearm. The researchers performed their test on 120 dealers in 20 cities. According to the study, the researchers at UCLA posed as potential buyers giving different reasons for wanting to buy guns. The researchers found that when they said they wanted to buy guns for an individual who needs it, 52 percent of dealers were willing to make the sale.

In addition to the first round of phone calls, the researchers randomly chose 20 dealers and again posed as prospective buyers. In the second round of calls, the researchers said they needed to buy guns for their boyfriend or girlfriend because he or she was not allowed to purchase a firearm. In 16 followup calls, the dealers responded with unequivocal nos and indicated that the purchases would be illegal. In the remaining four cases, the dealers agreed to sell the guns, but indicated to the customer that it was illegal. The researchers also interviewed law enforcement officials who concluded that such sales would amount to illegal straw purchases. A straw purchase involves a buyer with a clean record purchasing a gun for someone who is prohibited by law from doing so.

Some gun manufacturers and dealers know their practices facilitate criminal access to firearms but they do nothing about it. The Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which recently passed the House and has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee, would shield such negligent and reckless gun dealers and manufacturers from many legitimate civil lawsuits. Certainly, those in the industry who conduct their business negligently or recklessly should not be shielded from the consequences of their actions. This study contributes further evidence that there are some in the gun industry who could potentially avoid responsibility for their business practices under such legislation.

TRIBUTE TO BONNY O'NEIL

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join the three other sitting Senators who have served as chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, to salute a dedicated public servant, Ms. Bonny O'Neil, who is retiring after more than 34 years of meritorious service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

As the senior career official in the Department in charge of the Food Stamp Program, Ms. O'Neil is responsible for national oversight of policy and operations for a program that